

Bill would put an end to California fire fee

A bill introduced this week would kill the fire fee many people in rural California have to pay, including those in parts of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

This is not the first time state Sen. Ted Gaines, R-El Dorado, has tried to do away with a measure that was approved in 2011.

“This fire tax is illegal and unfair – plain and simple,” Gaines said in a press release. “Many rural property owners already pay local fire agencies for protection so it is clearly double-taxation and it is being dumped on the backs of rural Californians when parts of my district still have a more than 10-percent unemployment rate and families are struggling to make ends meet.”

Senate Bill 9 would reverse the annual \$152.33 fee for fire prevention services charged to property owners located in state responsibility areas designated by CalFire.

Their property taxes already contribute to the service contracts that counties have with CalFire.

“The answer to fire protection in California is not illegal taxes, but budgets that invest in core government services that protect every citizen in the state – rural, urban and suburban,” Gaines said.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*